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Are We Losing Our Moral Courage?

Moderator, GUNNAR BACK

Speakers

CHARLES JOHNSON

STANLEY HIGH



COMING

—May 26, 1953—

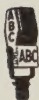
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Are We Losing Our Moral Courage?

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The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of views presented.

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

STANLEY HIGH—Senior Editor of *Reader's Digest*. Son of a Methodist preacher, Stanley High spent his boyhood in a succession of Nebraska and Wyoming parsonages. After graduation from Nebraska Wesleyan in 1916, he became a pilot in the U. S. Army Air Corps in World War I and following the armistice he served with two missions for reconstruction in Europe and China. Mr. High completed a theological course at Boston University in 1923. Deciding that he could reach more people with his pen than from a pulpit, he became a *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent for five years followed by four years as editor of *The Christian Herald*. From 1932-35 he was a current events broadcaster and Director of Talks for NBC. In 1940 he joined the staff of *The Reader's Digest*. Mr. High has traveled extensively in the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France and the British Isles, as well as to Australia and New Zealand. A series of articles on the British Labour government appeared in the *Digest* in 1946 and one on the first signs of European Recovery in 1948. His trip "Down Under" also produced a group of articles in which he analyzed these countries' experience with socialism. Other notable articles by Stanley High include, "Methodism's Pink Fringe" (Feb. '50), "Our Schools Need More Than Our Money" (Dec. '47), "We'll Remember Your Lies, Mr. Malik" (Dec. '50), "In Washington It's Waste As Usual" (July '51) and a series on Washington "Tyranny" in 1951. He has also written many books, among them *China's Place in the Sun*, *Europe Turns the Corner*, *A Working World* and *Roosevelt—and Then*. In both the 1944 and 1948 campaigns, Mr. High worked in behalf of Governor

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Are We Losing Our Moral Courage?

Announcer:

This week the founders, officers, and members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority meet in Washington, D. C., to observe their fortieth anniversary and to dedicate their new national headquarters. The Delta Sigma Theta Sorority is a national organization of college women and was founded in 1913 at Howard University with a membership of only 22. From this small farsighted group Delta Sigma Theta has grown until today its membership includes 15,000 college women with 229 chapters on college campuses and in communities all over the United States and the Republic of Haiti.

Scholarships are awarded annually to promising young women to study at home and abroad. The sorority works to increase job opportunities for all groups and helps in the guidance of youth entering upon their careers. Its members work to express in action their ideals, to help bring about a more peaceful world and promote the highest ideals of manhood. Now to preside as moderator for tonight's discussion is ABC's well-known Washington news reporter, Gunnar Ek.

Moderator Back:

Thank you. Tonight, Town Meeting, for the first time in many months, comes to you from Washington, your capital city. Here the it is always with us. Here all but us are the relics and monuments of the men and women who did not lose courage, moral or physical, in the difficult times of the past. Wherever you turn in Washington you find, chiseled in the words that have gone down in history as describing why Amer-

ica became a great nation, uttered and written and learned in faith by Americans who did not live to see the full promise. In their various ways these words remind us that we have always moved forward by holding true to a belief in the worth of the individual, in his right to liberty, in the conviction that our national unity has depended in the past, and always will depend, on the constant free play and the resultant conflicting opinions.

That's going on in Congress all day long here in Washington. Town Meeting tonight has come out to one of Washington's fine high schools, Cardozo High School, to discuss before an audience of almost two thousand people the subject: "Are We Losing Our Moral Courage?" There are those who will say instantly, no we are not. They will say we have only recently answered that question by sending Dwight D. Eisenhower to the White House with an overwhelming endorsement of his campaign promise of a moral regeneration in America. There are those who will say yes to the question, naming as just one symptom of our loss of moral courage the incident in Baltimore near here, when just last Saturday night, agents of the state government of Maryland were checking automobile licenses to find out who was attending a meeting of the eminently respectable United World Federalists at which three clergymen and a well-known Catholic layman spoke.

Dr. Charles S. Johnson, President of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, will argue that we are losing our moral courage. Virginia born, and educated there

and at the University of Chicago as a sociologist, Dr. Johnson has been head of Fisk University for seven years. He has served his government in Japan and at UNESCO. Howard, Columbia, Harvard, and Glasgow University in Scotland have given this prominent Negro educator honorary degrees. On the subject, "Are We Losing Our Moral Courage?", here is Dr. Charles S. Johnson.

Dr. Johnson:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. The subject is put as a question rather than a fact, but it is a fact that the question itself and the circumstances giving rise to it are today a matter of grave national concern. Moral courage is not to be confused with a display of power, or with reactions of fear, or the mere utterances and slogans and shibboleths. It is a positive quality, a willingness to defend those fundamental moral principles which one understands and believes. When this quality has been associated with our development as a nation it is made from a strength that enables us to say and to know that nothing in all history has succeeded like America.

Our great strength and phenomenal growth in America have been founded on our faith in the future and in the capacity of the individual to solve his problems and thereby create a better world. This has been the steady theme of our history.

But for whatever reason, less is heard today of our faith in the capacity of man and his moral strength, and more of the impersonal forces over which we have little or no control—forces pointing to the destruction of our security. Where there is any feeling akin to helplessness, more moral

courage is needed. There is undoubtedly need for national caution in this period of anxiety, but we display irrational fear, loss of nerve and the denial of fundamental principles in American culture, when we allow to become dominant in our national life the excited search for political heretics, the indiscriminate demands for loyalty oaths, and activities that tend to stifle spontaneity and courage for adventure which have been providing impetus to the advancement of knowledge.

We are in danger of defeating ourselves when we place a censorship over the free play of intelligence upon issues, or foster the urge and tendency to turn the spirit of free inquiry into indoctrination and restraint of criticism. We are in danger when we tolerate without protest sweeping attacks upon education. We know that moral bans in human relationships, in the end, transcend purely secular codes and customs. But knowing these things there is still indecision, and indecision is certainly not moral courage. From the time of our own national independence there has been sympathy and aid for the peoples who fought for their freedom and independence.

The basic theme of our democratic convictions has been human rights. In character and temperament, we are opposed to gross acts of inhumanity, but in these times we are not yet prepared to oppose genocide, we hesitate about a covenant on human rights. We find it more feasible to desert the principle of native self-rule in India, China and French North Africa to ignore the raging Gehenna in South Africa, the areas in the world most vulnerable to the spread of communism. Southeast

Asia and Africa are as yet getting comparatively little of the force of our moral courage and help.

On the domestic scene we are lagging in moral courage so long as fear or apathy or indifference dictates silence on the unfulfilled rights of our children to education, our economically depressed to adequate health care, our workers to security when their bodies are worn out, and that they have these values without regard to the exigencies of political parties. One of the strongest forces in the world today is the new and universal respect for the worth and dignity of every human personality. It's the core of the philosophy of human rights, of which civil rights is the domestic counterpart. There is a lack of moral courage, if believing this as Americans, the gap between the principle of equality and the reality of inequality is allowed to continue.

There have been great improvements in relations with the racial and religious minorities in recent years. No one who observes and honors the virtues of our national life can deny this. But these changes are not yet keeping pace with the compulsions of this present day. The most dangerous handicap to the extension of our basic democratic philosophy to the other peoples of the world is the denial of its validity by those who oppose the extension of civil rights home.

If we as a nation in our own doctrine of human rights whether involving race or class, sex or religion, awake, under the full light of our new national self-awareness, give them living reality now. The late Peter Marshall led a prayer before the United States Senate petitioned, "Help us Lord, when we want to do

what is right but do not know how to do it; but help us most, O, Lord, when we know very well what to do but do not want to do it."
(Applause)

Mr. Back: Thank you, Dr. Charles S. Johnson, you have drawn up a rather full indictment. We turn now to Stanley High who, like Dr. Johnson, is the son of a clergyman, a pilot in World War I. Mr. High took a theological degree at Boston University but he turned to newspaper work and editing rather than the pulpit, for the *Christian Science Monitor* first and the *Christian Herald*. He has been editor, he is now Senior Editor of *Reader's Digest*, since 1940. You have seen his name on the many articles he has written for that publication. He was in the inner circle as an advisor of the Dewey and Eisenhower presidential campaigns. Dr. High does not believe we are losing our moral courage. Here is Stanley High.

Mr. High:

I have listened to Dr. Johnson with a great deal of pleasure and unhappily with too much agreement. I've got my own definition of moral courage which is this. Moral courage is what it takes to meet up with the injustice or discrimination or exploitation or hate; and to see when it is more popular to ignore; to speak out when it is easier to be silent; to try to set things right when it is safer to keep hands off what's wrong. Moral courage is not something, it is always somebody—some man or some woman or some little group who take the risk, who go forward first, who pull the rest of us up after them. They in every generation in your town and mine are the saving handful who make it easier for decency and tougher for degradation.

America's more than a sum total of all its gadgets, handy as they are; it is more than a sum total of all its shortcomings, grievous as they are. America is the American Negro, winning against prejudice, a fuller freer life; it is the American Catholic and the American Jew achieving, against bigotry, respect, good will, and leadership; it is the American workingman, establishing against greed and selfishness his rights, his security and his future; it is slums making way for low-cost housing; it is the visiting nurse and the free clinic; it is public education; it is a government which is ours to chose and ours to change; it is the right to dream dreams and the opportunity to make those dreams come true.

It was not by any process of spontaneous moral combustion that America came to pass. Back of every one of those moral achievements is a moral struggle. Back of the gradual winning of every such struggle is moral courage—the moral courage of Americans who believed and acted on the belief that God is not necessarily on the side of the heaviest battalions of the biggest bankbook, that the end does not justify the means, that a man is innocent until he is proven guilty, that the laborer is worthy of his hire, that all men are created equal, that in a struggle for human emancipation the time is always ripe.

Are we losing our moral courage? Of course not; we are increasing it. The other day the national scholarship fraternity, Phi Beta Kappa, installed a chapter in a great Negro university, the first ever granted a Negro school. On that occasion a great Negro leader said, "This honor is shining proof that academic excellence knows no bar-

riers, racial, economic or otherwise. We hold that it is a great testament to the opportunities that are ever widening in the free world that America champions." The Negro school which won that honor was Fisk University. The Negro leader who made that great declaration of faith was its president Charles S. Johnson. (*Applause*) Dr. Johnson's is a description of an America which is not losing its moral courage. In an argument like this I know of no man in America I would rather have on my side. (*Applause*)

Mr. Back: Thank you, Mr. Stanley High. Dr. Johnson, I would not take for a moment away from the compliment you have just received, but you're not going to let that disarm you, are you, Dr. Johnson?

Dr. Johnson: No. If all of America were in the position of the institutions of higher learning in this country insofar as moral courage is concerned, I think I would be less disturbed about the present state of affairs.

Mr. Back: Well, now you had an optimistic picture, I think I might say, from Mr. High. Yours, I think, was somewhat pessimistic. Do you accept all the optimism that you have just heard, Dr. Johnson?

Dr. Johnson: Not quite, we can pick quite readily many examples of development, progress; but I am thinking about the present stage of our anxiety, our national tensions, that seem to be turning into fear and to compelling conformity to a point that it is becoming dangerous to dissent or to disagree or to have an independent point of view.

Mr. High: Well, I don't know who is afraid. I don't think Dr. Johnson is and I am sure I am not.

hear a lot about educators being frightened. I am speaking with a firsthand knowledge, not as an educator but as the father of two daughters, who I hope are being educated. At least their education is being paid for by their father. But I have some contact with the faculties of these two universities and I must say I detect no fear among them. I also have a wife who unexpectedly went back to college this year, much to my surprise, and she is taking a course in economics.

You ought to hear what that economics teacher says about the American capitalistic system. Maybe some educators are living under this pall of fear, but certainly that teacher in this great university is not one of them. Well, now, who's afraid? Where are these frightened people? Where are the areas in our national life for anxiety, and what may happen tomorrow by virtue of this infringement of our rights, where that anxiety is so much on the surface? I think we ought to be specific and narrow it down.

Mr. Back: Dr. Johnson, you have heard the questions raised.

Dr. Johnson: The anxiety exists in most of the educational institutions, I would say, in the country, where faculties now are aware that it is not as safe to give expression to dissenting opinions as they once felt that it was. I recall the concern expressed by President Conant just before retiring from his post at Harvard University. He was called on to defend the freedom of the universities against those who were attacking the institutions and he said in substance, by way of this defense, that those who are objecting to teachings in the universities are either those reactionaries who do not serious-

ly believe in the basic American principles themselves, or who are defeatists who do not really believe in the success of their own principles when they are put to test in an open competition.

Mr. High: I would dislike very much to think of any college professors being seriously frightened, although I must say this in passing. It is time that some college professors, more than a few, had called to their attention the fact that there are some basic truths in American life which have produced America as it now is, and as it will be in the future. And some measure, it seems to me, of moral discipline needs to be enforced against these people who have developed among themselves a too easy criticism of things American, as though America were no more than the sum total of the things that are wrong with it.

But having said that, I remember, just the other day, there was a great meeting of high school teachers over in Atlantic City. There were thousands of them there. They came from the four corners of the country. They didn't scurry there out of their diverse and sundry ant hills like frightened people. They were addressed by Mrs. Agnes Meyer, the wife of the publisher of the *Washington Post*, in one of the most outspoken criticisms that has yet been delivered before an American audience in regard to some of these things. Well, as long as that is possible, and as long as teachers can go back to their schools having heard declarations of that kind, I am not greatly alarmed at what may happen to them when they get home.

Mr. Back: Well, Dr. Johnson, I presume that you are greatly alarmed and perhaps you can docu-

ment your argument a bit more fully.

Dr. Johnson: Well, Mrs. Meyer was not a school person. She was a newspaper woman. She made a very forthright and effective statement. It was listened to by the assembled teachers. I don't believe I have heard as forthright a statement in support of her from the educators on that occasion. But even so she has been most violently criticized by persons who felt that she had no right to make such criticisms.

Mr. High: Well, I wish, Gunnar, we could switch a little bit on this thing if I may suggest it, because certainly moral courage involves more than simply this matter of fear, whether it is pseudo-fear or induced fear or a real fear. Actually moral courage is back of every single straw of evidence that appears in the day's news that people who have not had a fair deal are getting more of a fair deal. You cannot drop into any problem area of American life, whether it is in the tenements of our great cities, whether it is in the deep and, sometimes called dark, South, or wherever it is, and touch any problem of America and not discover there and in concrete terms we are making progress.

I have here the clips from the last four days of newspapers. Here is an article from the *Washington Post* about how the Negro has found a real democracy in baseball. Did that happen by spontaneous moral combustion? Of course not. Somebody who had moral courage was back of Jackie Robinson and all the Negro players who followed so nobly in his train. (*Applause*) Here is the current issue of *Time Magazine* announcing the annual awards of the Pulitzer prize winning jour-

nalists, and who won the first awards? Two country editors down in the rural and presumably prejudice ridden communities in North Carolina and why did they win these awards? Because they took up against the Ku Klux Klan and licked that venal organization, and for that they got the Pulitzer award. The moral courage of two men did that.

Here we've got a full page ad in the New York papers, yesterday morning, by this great Negro press, the Johnson Press, which publishes *Ebony*, *Tan*, and *Jet*—many of you have read that magazine, I know Mr. Johnson personally—calling attention to the economic progress of the American Negro in the last twenty years, sufficient to enable this Negro publication to take out these full page advertisements. Here is the story of Dr. Murray, the first Negro ever elected head of the New York County Medical Society, the largest Medical Society in the world. Well, incident after incident is evidence of the fact that somebody's moral courage is working in all these areas.

Mr. Back: I think we are going to turn to questions in just a moment and I think with those questions, we will probably get a structure to work on that we haven't had quite yet, but just let me go back to something I said at the introduction. I mentioned an episode in Baltimore of last Saturday night and one of the clergymen, the Protestant clergyman who was there that night, said that he was sure that many people in Baltimore feared coming to this meeting of the United World Federalists because the idea is not a popular one. What do you think of that, Dr. Johnson? Is that an illustration of what you are talking about?

Dr. Johnson: Yes, it is, Mr. Chairman. Just a short while ago at our own university we were threatened because we were having a Negro poet appear to read his poems. There were protests from organizations and attempts to get publicity to prevent him from appearing. Now poetry reading was not considered by us a very serious matter, but nevertheless it gave us great difficulty and I suppose that something of the same thing was true in the Baltimore situation.

Mr. High: All I can ask about the Baltimore situation is: Is that an incident or is it a trend? If it is an incident, it doesn't deserve our serious consideration. If it is a trend, then it does. I deny that it is a trend. All over the United States, in my opinion, the trend is in the opposite direction.

Mr. Back: Dr. Johnson, do you want to reply to that before I turn to the question that was submitted by one of our listeners?

Dr. Johnson: Well, I would suggest that it is a trend and that is why I am concerned about it. It is a trend in my opinion when it happens consistently in a great many places.

Mr. Back: By the way, explaining the reference to the United World Federalists, it is an organization which believes that the United Nations should be strengthened in terms of a world government organization. It has had trouble recently in the state of Maryland. That's the reason I brought it up as an example tonight. Well, each week Town Meeting presents a complete up to date reference work, which is a handsome twenty-volume set of the American People's Encyclopedia, to the listener

who submits the most provocative and timely question pertinent to the subject under discussion. Tonight's question comes from Mr. Samuel O. Cumberland who lives at 467 Smithfield Avenue in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Mr. Cumberland's question is this: "If we are losing our moral courage, is it due to weak religious leadership or due to tensions caused by present world confusion?" Let me address that question first to Stanley High.

Mr. High: Well, of course, I deny that we are losing our moral courage, but if we are losing it, I think in those places where moral courage is lacking, I would say the lack of religion has a good deal to do with it. In those places where our problems do not summon forth enough moral courage to solve them, that is more largely the responsibility of religion than any other agency, because religion claims to have the answer.

Mr. Back: Now let's turn to Dr. Johnson.

Dr. Johnson: Well, I think it is due to both. I think the present state of anxiety, which has so clearly turned to fear in many quarters, is responsible for a loss of moral courage, a falling off of moral courage, a weakening of it. I believe that there is continuing religious leadership but I would feel that there is less response to it at the present, that it certainly does not make itself especially conspicuous in these times. In earlier periods we could look to the future. That was the strength of our development. There is not so much looking to the future today. There is a kind of fatalism, it seems to me, that places us in the hands of forces over which we have no control.

Mr. Back: Dr. Johnson, thanks very much. Looking into the faces of this very vast audience tonight at Cardozo High School in

Washington, D. C., I think I note a lot of questions for the both of you, an eagerness to ask questions. State your question please.



QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Questioner: My question is addressed to Mr. Stanley High. What steps should be taken to assist the young people, or teen-agers, in maintaining moral courage?

Mr. High: The best steps that can be taken to assist young people to develop moral courage is to have parents who have moral courage, in my opinion. (*Applause*)

Questioner: Mr. High, would not Thomas Jefferson, with his emphasis on moral bearing and fearless expression in democracy be very unpopular in America today?

Mr. High: I don't believe so, if I may presume to predict what he would be like. I don't think we ever had a political candidate—and I am not getting partisan, don't misunderstand me—we never had a political candidate who so clearly declared moral principles in the course of a campaign as we had in this last campaign, in the person of General Eisenhower. That's why he dared call this thing a crusade, because he pitched it on a moral level, and I think Jefferson would have felt very much at home. He might have voted for Stevenson, having been a Democrat, but I think he would have felt very much at home with President Eisenhower.

Mr. Back: All right, we will go to our next question.

Questioner: This question is for Dr. Johnson. Fear being one impediment of losing moral courage,

how can we bring men together to think justly of one another?

Dr. Johnson: With fear as one of the elements in a lack of moral courage I believe that the best way of bringing men together is finding a common denominator, in those principles that we began with as a nation, and in acting as if we believed in them.

Mr. Back: Does that conclude your answer? All right, let's go to question number three.

Questioner: In the fight against one form of totalitarianism, such as we know it today, are we in danger of allowing another, perhaps even greater, to develop in its place?

Mr. High: I think that in any all-out fight against any evil we are always in danger of developing the same qualities as the evil we are trying to suppress. I agree with Dr. Johnson 100 per cent that we've got to keep determined vigilance against the possibility that that sort of totalitarianism may arise in us in the process of destroying the totalitarianism that we are now ostensibly fighting. But do I think that that threat is on the immediate horizon? No, I certainly do not. Otherwise we would feel far more uneasy in a discussion such as we are having tonight than I am sure any of us feel.

Mr. Back: Dr. High, do you find any traces of that thing which the audience seems to feel does

exist, and that they are looking for answers to tonight? Do you find some dangers on the horizon? Are any congressional committees going too far?

Mr. High: Yes, I personally do not approve of the extent to which some congressional committees— I will not name the Senators who may be chairmen of them—I am not in favor of the methods that they use. It is rather reassuring that the Gallup poll, taken two weeks ago, of the American people in those methods showed they were nearly two to one in opposition to the methods that were being used, which shows that by and large the American people have not been intimidated.

Questioner: What factors, and this question is directed to Dr. Johnson, I want to know what factors have developed out of World War II that we could probably associate with the weakening of our moral courage.

Dr. Johnson: Following World War II we have had an increase in tensions in this country. We've become important in the world today as a leading power; we have shouldered vast responsibilities and we are now faced with the responsibility of demonstrating to the rest of the world that the principles that we espouse are good for the rest of the world, and in so many instances we find that we cannot yet bring ourselves to make that demonstration. I don't think it is necessary to detail some of the feelings, but I can say this that we are probably spending billions of dollars in arms, when we could spend vastly less, if we changed some of our policies at home to such an extent that we could create confidence in those peoples of the world who are looking to us for leadership. (*Applause*)

Questioner: My question is directed to Stanley High. Isn't the church showing a lack of moral courage in not welcoming Negroes in white churches, when our schools are considering non-segregation?

Mr. High: Certainly. (*Applause*) As I say you've got to judge the church, I suppose, as a human institution save for the fact that it claims to be a Divine one. Alongside that claim, in my judgment, there is no social institution that has fallen so far short in so many crucial areas as the Christian Church, and I say that as an active church member.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. High.

Questioner: My question is directed to Dr. Johnson. Dr. Johnson, since you feel that we are losing moral courage, how can we so toughen the moral fibre of our youth that moral courage will not be so easily lost?

Dr. Johnson: Well, Mr. High has given one answer to this type of question. Another answer might be to give these youth a chance to develop these qualities by actual observations of the demonstration of these qualities by their elders, by the responsible people. I think it is almost meaningless to attempt to get over these principles merely by preachment. The best way to do it is by living them and when this is observed, I think, there is no problem about young people discovering that these are the values that are the eternal values and the right ones.

Questioner: I would like Mr. High to tell me how we can maintain moral courage as individuals, and especially the young men of our country, with continual wars and the hardship and the taxation

that follows that type of life that we have lived now for year after year and no sign of peace today.

Mr. High: You seem to forget that we just elected a Republican administration.

Mr. Back: Mr. High, that's a very short answer. Have you finished?

Mr. High: No, I want to say this. We have got moral courage to do some things that we didn't do after the first World War. We lacked moral courage to enter the League; this time we have moral courage enough to enter the UN. We lacked moral courage enough to stop Mussolini in Ethiopia and Hitler in the Rhineland, this time we have moral courage enough to stop the communists in Korea. I think we are making some progress but I admit it is exceedingly slow.

Questioner: I make the premise that our educators of today do not have the stamina that educators in the earlier beginning of this country, therefore this question to Dr. Johnson. Is not the timidity or fear, shown by some educational leaders in the approach to controversial subjects, evidence of a lack of our moral courage?

Dr. Johnson: Well, I would say that it is and that is one of the

things that I have observed with regret.

Mr. Back: We go to this young lady now.

Questioner: I am directing my question to Dr. Johnson. If we are losing our moral courage, how do you suggest that teachers handle controversial issues that arrive in our classrooms?

Dr. Johnson: The teachers are not responsible themselves for the kind of atmosphere that intimidates them and makes criticism and a free play of intelligence on issues, an uncomfortable, if not a dangerous practice. I think that is the nation itself, the people, the community, our officials, and those who feel responsible for the schools, who permit such an atmosphere to continue.

Mr. Back: Thank you, Dr. Johnson and Mr. High, for your very interesting discussion. I am sorry we have to cut it off at this juncture. On behalf of Town Hall we wish to express our appreciation to Mrs. Dorothy Height, President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Miss Patricia Roberts, Executive Director, and their Executive Committee officers, Mrs. Theodora Daniel and Mrs. Naomi Newman. Our thanks also to the staff of WMAL, the ABC outlet in the nation's capital.



THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

(Continued from page 2)

Dewey's candidacy. He was a member of General Eisenhower's staff during the recent Presidential campaign.

DR. CHARLES S. JOHNSON—President of Fisk University. Dr. Johnson, a leading Negro educator, was born in Virginia in 1893, the son of a Baptist minister. After graduating from the Virginia Union University, he did graduate work in sociology at the University of Chicago, becoming at the same time associate executive secretary of Chicago's Commission in Race Relations. In 1921 Dr. Johnson went to the National Urban League in New York and founded the League's periodical, *Opportunity*, a Journal of Negro Life, which he edited until 1929. In 1928 he became head of the Department of Social Sciences at Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn., and remained in this post until his election to the presidency of this institution in 1946. Also in 1946 he was appointed a member of the American Commission of twenty educators sent to Japan to advise on the reorganization of the educational system of that country. Immediately afterward President Truman named him to be one of the ten United States delegates to the First Session of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization in Paris and to the Second Session in Mexico City in 1947. Dr. Johnson is now a member of the Executive Committee of the United States National Commission for UNESCO. In 1948 he was appointed a member of the President's Board of Foreign Scholarships under the Fulbright Act. Dr. Johnson is the author of several books on the Negro and race relations. For his outstanding work he has received several honorary degrees from Howard, Columbia and Harvard Universities, and in 1930 was awarded the William E. Harmon gold medal for distinguished achievement among Negroes in the field of science. Last year he became the first American Negro to receive an honorary degree from the University of Glasgow.

FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Background Questions

1. What is courage and how does it manifest itself?
 - a. Is it a physical self-affirmation of one's being and determination to survive?
 - b. Is it an acceptance of the inevitability of death?
 - c. Is it an ethical reality?
 - d. Can a person confused as to his moral standards or convictions be expected to display the courage thereof?
2. How can we recognize moral laxity or moral strength?
 - a. Are moral standards absolute? Or, do they change with the times?
 - b. What are the spiritual values which should give us a basis for ethical living?
 - c. Are we as sure of what is right or wrong as we were in the past?
 - d. Are our traditions and convictions a satisfactory guide to action?
3. What is responsibility for the current confusion between morality and legality?
 - a. Can any moral order be completely circumscribed by law?
 - b. Are we neglecting the distinction between the spirit and the letter of the law?
4. Is morality essentially a personal and individual matter?
 - a. Or, is there a higher morality that transcends the individual?
 - b. If so, from where does this morality emanate—God, Natural Law, the state, an elite party or class?
5. Is religion succeeding in bringing about the application of moral precepts to daily life?
 - a. Have religious groups stood firm against cowardice and bigotry?
 - b. Have they stressed moral action above ritual, ceremonies and symbols?
6. Is church-going and church membership increasing or decreasing?
 - a. If it is increasing, is this a sign of greater moral courage or greater insecurity?
 - b. Can religious affiliation tend to become a badge of social respectability and conformity?
7. Have our schools succeeded in teaching moral values and inspiring courage in our youth? Or, have they reflected the confusion and the prejudices of the society in which they function?
8. Are moral standards in the U. S. today higher, lower or the same as compared with our past history?
 - a. Is it true that the American people have become opportunistic and expedient?

- b. Is public apathy toward corruption and acceptance of wrongdoing widespread?
- c. Or, are we becoming increasingly concerned with poor standards and conduct?
- d. Have we become more or less tolerant of authoritarian forces in our midst?
- e. Is it true that we are becoming a fearful, hostile and anxiety-ridden people?

How should we interpret the many evidences of public immorality?

- a. Are public morals any better or worse than the morals standards of the society and the individuals who compose it?
- b. Does evidence of unethical behavior in education, sports, social relations, etc. indicate that corruption in the U. S. runs deeper than politics?

How can we eliminate in our public life, what Sen. Fulbright described as "operations in a shadowy region between what is legal and what is illegal?"

- a. Would an official code of ethics for public servants assure integrity in public life?
- b. Can standards of public behavior be raised through legislation?

Have our governing bodies taken a strong stand on the issues of public morality?

- a. Have both the House and the Senate maintained the moral authority of their respective bodies by disciplining their own members?
- b. Have administrative officials taken an unequivocal stand on issues involving public morality?

Is it true that our tradition of political freedom is being undermined by hysteria about the threat of Communism? If yes, are we becoming easier prey for the demagogue and the charlatan?

Is it true that the "cultural vigilantism" of certain pressure groups has curtailed freedom of expression in education, law, the theater, films, the press, radio, television and other social fields?

- a. Are self-appointed censors slowly making "heresy" as well as treason a crime?
- b. Has refusal to denounce the heresy of others become a crime?
- c. Is the distinction between words and acts being blotted out of our thinking?

How can we best assure the preservation of our judicial processes and an atmosphere in which they can justly operate?

- a. Is there an increasing tendency to dispense with legal machinery in deciding legal guilt or innocence?
- b. Has poor or mistaken judgment become legally incriminating?



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